

40. A near-field optical head according to claim 19; further comprising a through-hole formed in the support member and terminating in the microscopic aperture; a light shielding layer covering the through-hole except for the microscopic aperture; and a light source disposed on a top surface of the support member above the through hole so that a light path is defined by the light source, the through-hole, and the microscopic aperture.

ADDITIONAL FEES:

No additional fees are believed required; however, should it be determined that a fee is due, authorization is hereby given to charge any such fee to our Deposit Account No. 01-0268.

REMARKS

By this amendment, applicants have added dependent claims 33-40 to further define the probe structure of the inventive near-field optical head.

More specifically, the newly added dependent claims define the probe as having a through-hole formed in the slider (claim 1) or support member (claim 19), a light-shielding layer covering the through-hole, and a light source disposed on a top surface of the slider over the through-hole so that a

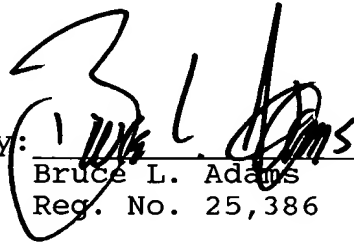
light path is defined by the light source, the through-hole and the microscopic aperture.

The cited reference to Knight fails to disclose or suggest the claimed subject matter.

In view of the foregoing amendments and discussion, the application is now believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance of the claims are most respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

ADAMS & WILKS
Attorneys for Applicants

By: 
Bruce L. Adams
Reg. No. 25,386

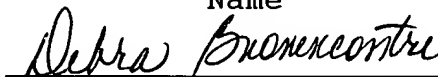
50 Broadway - 31st Floor
New York, NY 10004
(212) 809-3700

MAILING CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: MS NON-FEE AMENDMENT, COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date indicated below.

Debra Buonincontri

Name



Signature

June 12, 2003

Date